

A. Claim 1

In the March 23, 2006 Response, Applicant argued that Ichida fails to disclose a resilient contact piece portion that has beginning and intermediate portions that are substantially in parallel to the bottom wall.

In the current Office Action, the Examiner continues to maintain that Ichida discloses the claimed beginning and intermediate portions, but has failed to address Applicant's arguments. Applicant submits that Ichida fails to disclose the claimed substantially parallel portions.

As set forth on page 4 of the March 23, 2006 Response, in Figures 8 and 9 of Ichida, the portions before and after the alleged first curved portion 39 are not substantially in parallel to the alleged bottom wall 33 at a predetermined clearance. Rather, both portions on either side of the alleged first curved portion 39 incline towards portion 39. Therefore, the clearance between the resilient contact piece 38 and the alleged bottom wall 33, on either side of the portion 39, will vary along their lengths. As specifically set forth in Ichida, "the resilient contact piece 38 is supported only at one end and has a substantially triangular shape" (emphasis added) (col. 7, lines 7-9). Due to such *triangular shape*, the portions on either side of the alleged first curved portion 39 (i.e., the sides of the triangle) are not substantially parallel to the alleged bottom wall 33, as recited in claim 1. In other words, Ichida specifically discloses that the piece 38 is substantially triangular shaped, thus implying that the portions on either side of portion 39 (i.e., the bulge) are inclined. Applicant submits that one skilled in the art would not consider the

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“substantially triangular shape” of Ichida as equal or comparable to the “substantially parallel” recitation of claim 1 (i.e., triangular \neq parallel).

In view of MPEP §707.07(f), Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to address the substance of Applicant’s arguments if the rejection of this feature is to be maintained.

In addition, Applicant submits that the APA fails to cure the above deficient teaching of Ichida. Rather, the APA discloses a triangular shape similar to that of Ichida (i.e., there are no portions substantially in parallel to a bottom wall).

At least based on the foregoing, Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable over the cited references and respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the rejection.

B. Claims 4, 5, 7-9, 12 and 13

Since claims 4, 5, 7-9, 12 and 13 are dependent upon claim 1, Applicant submits that such claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

II. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

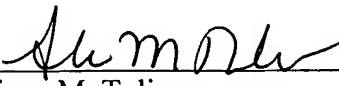
Respectfully submitted,

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